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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 000358

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EI](#) [EUN](#)  
SUBJECT: IRELAND ON GYMnich, GAERC

REF: A. REFS: A. NARDI E-MAIL &GAERC POINTS8 09/05/09  
[1](#)B. STATE 92641  
[1](#)C. DUBLIN 348

DUBLIN 00000358 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: DCM Robert J. Faucher. Reasons 1.4(b/d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: On September 9, Poloff spoke with Peter Ryan, European Correspondent in the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) about the September 4-5 EU FMs, Gymnich meeting and their upcoming GAERC meeting on September 14-15. According to Ryan, EU FMs, concerned by developments in Afghanistan, are still chewing on the draft EU Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy. On Iran, the EU FMs asked for further working-level analysis before deciding on next steps. On the Middle East, FMs appeared upbeat on the prospects for peace and hopeful that Syria might play a constructive role. Substantive discussion on Sri Lanka is not slated for next week, s GAERC, and detailed discussion of the EU as a global player has been postponed until the October GAERC. NOTE: Although Ryan traveled to the Gymnich with Irish FM Micheal Martin, he did not attend the FMs, discussions. This report is based on briefings Ryan received from the Swedish EU Presidency. End Summary.

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AFGHANISTAN: MOOD DOWNBEAT, BUT EU STAYING COURSE  
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[1](#)2. (C) Ryan said that the general mood at Gymnich on Afghanistan appeared to be downbeat. EU FMs were concerned about the fairness of the elections, the deteriorating security situation and the need better to inform European publics on what the EU was doing in Afghanistan and why. He said that, in response to many FMs, laments that their publics were increasingly questioning the purpose and wisdom of EU involvement in Afghanistan, the Swedish EU Presidency asked member states for input by this week into the EU Commission, s &Blue Book8 that would outline what the EU was doing in Afghanistan and why. According to Ryan, some FMs called for an increase of personnel for the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan.

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AFPAK STRATEGY PAPER SPLIT IN TWO?  
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[1](#)3. (C) On Pakistan, Ryan said only that FMs had decided at Gymnich that two strategy papers were needed, one on Pakistan and the other on Afghanistan.

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UNCERTAINTY ON IRAN  
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14. (C) Regarding internal developments in Iran, Ryan said EU FMs, reactions were a mix of encouragement at the signs of a reawakening of civil society and opposition, and dismay at the show trials, the ascendance of the hardliners, and Iran's stonewalling at the IAEA. Some FMs argued that any additional EU sanctions should wait until the domestic climate in Iran stabilized, lest a harder EU line result in an even worse crackdown on the domestic Iranian opposition. Finally, EU FMs requested a working-level analysis on Iran to help guide them on next steps.

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EU UPBEAT ON MIDDLE EAST  
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15. (C) Commenting on EU High Representative Javier Solana's briefing of FMs at Gymnich on his recent trip to the Middle East, the Swedish EU presidency used the phrase &window of opportunity8 several times, according to Ryan. The EU supports U.S. efforts in the region, and is eager to help in any way possible. There was some discussion of the timing of a possible &upgrade8 in EU-Israel relations, with general consensus being the EU should hold off on any such move until concrete progress had been made in the peace process. Ryan said he believed the EU was hopeful that Syria could play a constructive role in the Middle East Peace Process, and predicted that the EU would approve an Association Agreement with Syria soon.

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SRI LANKA NOT TO BE DISCUSSED AT GAERC  
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DUBLIN 00000358 002.2 OF 002

16. (C) Poloff delivered ref B points on Sri Lanka, and Ryan said the EU was no longer planning to discuss Sri Lanka at the GAERC. He said, however, that Ireland and the EU shared U.S. concerns, outlined in ref B, about the slow pace of release of IDPs from the detention camps, and promised to pass our message on Sri Lanka on within the DFA.

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EU AS GLOBAL PLAYER  
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17. (C) Ryan said plans to discuss at Gymnich how the EU would undertake to increase its weight as a global player proved premature. Since the requisite EU restructuring would take place under the Lisbon Treaty, FMs decided to postpone discussions until after the second Irish referendum on Lisbon on October 2 (septel). Ryan predicted that the October GAERC would discuss the topic in detail if Irish voters approve the Lisbon Treaty.  
FAUCHER